

Amendments to the Claims

The listing of claims below will replace all prior versions and listings of claims in the application. The changes to currently amended claims are shown using strikethrough to identify deleted material and underlining to identify added material, except that when strikethrough would be difficult to perceive (e.g., as in the deletion of punctuation marks, such as periods), double brackets are used instead of strikethrough to identify the deleted material.

Listing of Claims:

1. (currently amended) A sweetening composition comprising:
at least one sweetening agent comprising a polyol; and
inulin, which comprises at least about 25 percent by weight of the combination of said at least one sweetening agent and said inulin, such that a tendency of the polyol to induce diarrhea upon consumption is at least partially reduced.
2. (original) The composition of claim 1, wherein said polyol is selected from the group consisting of xylitol, sorbitol, maltitol, mannitol, isomalt, isomaltitol, lactitol, hydrogenated starch hydrolysates, glycerol, propylene glycol, erythritol, galactitol, and combinations thereof.
3. (original) The composition of claim 1, wherein said polyol is selected from the group consisting of xylitol, sorbitol, maltitol, mannitol, and combinations thereof.
4. (original) The composition of claim 1, wherein said polyol is selected from the group consisting of xylitol, sorbitol, and a combination thereof.
5. (original) The composition of claim 1, wherein said polyol is xylitol.
6. (original) The composition of claim 1, in which said sweetening agent further comprises a polysaccharide containing at least three monosaccharide units.

7. (original) The composition of claim 1, wherein said sweetening agent further comprises a monosaccharide selected from the group consisting of glyceraldehyde, erythrose, threose, ribose, arabinose, xylose, lyxose, allose, altrose, glucose, mannose, gulose, idose, galactose, talose, dihydroxyacetone, erythrulose, ribulose, xylulose, psicose, fructose, sorbose, tagatose, and combinations thereof.

8. (original) The composition of claim 7, wherein said monosaccharide is selected from the group consisting of fructose, glucose, and a combination thereof.

9. (original) The composition of claim 7, wherein said monosaccharide comprises fructose.

10. (original) The composition of claim 1, wherein said sweetening agent further comprises a disaccharide selected from the group consisting of maltose, lactose, sucrose, isomaltulose, maltulose, isomaltose, cellobiose, and combinations thereof.

11. (original) The composition of claim 10, wherein said disaccharide comprises maltose.

12. (original) The composition of claim 10, wherein said disaccharide comprises lactose.

13. (currently amended) A sweetening composition comprising:
a sweetening agent comprising a polyol and fructose; and
inulin, which comprises at least about 25 percent by weight of the
combination of said sweetening agent and said inulin, such that a tendency of the
polyol and/or fructose to induce diarrhea upon consumption is at least partially
reduced.

14. (original) The composition of claim 13, wherein said polyol comprises xylitol.

15. (original) The composition of any one of claims 1 to 14, wherein said inulin comprises at least about 30 percent by weight of the combination of said at least one sweetening agent and said inulin.

16. (original) The composition of any one of claims 1 to 14, wherein said inulin comprises at least about 35 percent by weight of the combination of said at least one sweetening agent and said inulin.

17. (original) The composition of any one of claims 1 to 14, wherein said inulin comprises at least about 40 percent by weight of the combination of said at least one sweetening agent and said inulin.

18. (original) The composition of any one of claims 1 to 14, wherein said inulin comprises polysaccharides having molecular weights up to and including about 2288, in an amount of at least 75 percent by weight of said inulin.

19. (original) The composition of any one of claims 1 to 14, wherein said inulin comprises polysaccharides having molecular weights above about 2288, in an amount of at least 75 percent by weight of said inulin.

20. (currently amended) A sweetening composition comprising:
a sweetening agent comprising at least one polyol selected from the group consisting of xylitol, sorbitol, and a combination thereof; and
inulin, which comprises at least about 25 percent by weight of the combination of said at least one sweetening agent and said inulin, such that a tendency of the at least one polyol to induce diarrhea upon consumption is at least partially reduced.

21. (currently amended) A sweetening composition comprising:
a sweetening agent comprising xylitol, lactose, and fructose; and
inulin, which comprises at least about 25 percent by weight of the
combination of said sweetening agent and said inulin, such that a tendency of the
xylitol and/or lactose and/or fructose to induce diarrhea upon consumption is at
least partially reduced.
22. (currently amended) A sweetening composition comprising:
a sweetening agent comprising lactose and xylitol; and
inulin, which comprises at least about 25 percent by weight of the
combination of said sweetening agent and said inulin, such that a tendency of the
lactose and/or xylitol to induce diarrhea upon consumption is at least partially
reduced. [[.]]
23. (original) A foodstuff comprising a sweetening composition as recited in
any one of claims 1, 13, 14, 20, 21 or 22.
24. (original) A foodstuff comprising a sweetening composition as recited in
any one of claims 1, 13, 14, 20, 21 or 22, wherein said foodstuff is selected from the
group consisting of gum, candy, ice cream, cheese, yogurt, cottage cheese, cake,
cookies and beverages.
25. (original) The composition of any one of claims 1, 13, 14, 20, 21, 22 or 23,
wherein said sweetening agent further comprises at least one intense sweetener.
26. (currently amended) A method for preparing a foodstuff comprised of a
plurality of ingredients, said method comprising:
(a) combining a first of said ingredients with at least one sweetening
agent comprising a polyol; and
(b) combining a second of said ingredients with inulin in an amount
which comprises at least about 25 percent by weight of the combination of said at

least one sweetening agent and said inulin, such that a tendency of the polyol to induce diarrhea upon consumption is at least partially reduced; wherein

said first and said second of said ingredients are either the same ingredient or else different ingredients.

27. (original) The method of claim 26, wherein said foodstuff is selected from the group consisting of candy, ice cream, cake, cookies and beverages.

28. (currently amended) A method for preparing a foodstuff, said method comprising:

adding to said foodstuff:

- (i) at least one sweetening agent comprising a polyol; and
- (ii) inulin, which comprises at least about 25 percent by weight of the combination of said at least one sweetening agent and said inulin, such that a tendency of the polyol to induce diarrhea upon consumption is at least partially reduced; wherein

said at least one sweetening agent and said inulin are added to said foodstuff either in combination at the same time, or else in separate portions at different times.

29. (original) The method of claim 28, wherein said foodstuff is selected from the group consisting of candy, ice cream, cheese, cottage cheese, milk, cake, cookies and beverages.

SUPPORT FOR AMENDMENTS

The amendments to independent claims 1, 13, 20, 21, 22, 26, and 28 were made for clarification and are fully supported by the description in the specification (e.g., page 4, lines 3-8 and 12-15; page 5, lines 22-25; page 7, lines 3-13; page 8, lines 26-32; page 9, lines 15-20; page 10, lines 1-4; etc.). No new matter has been added. Upon entry of this Response, claims 1-29 remain present and active in the application.